Industry Profiles

Retail Trade Industry

Revised: February 2008

Alberta
Employment, Immigration and Industry

Overview:

The Retail Trade industry[1] in Alberta includes two types of retailers:

- stores that attract walk-in customers for products and related services; and
- non-store retailers who reach customers and market merchandise via other methods (i.e. infomercials, direct-response advertising, traditional and electronic catalogues, in-home demonstrations and vending machines).

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[1] North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) major groups 44 and 45

Section A: Business Environment

1. 2006 Employment and Unemployment Numbers and Rates:

	Alberta	Retail Trade Industry
Number of employed	1,870,700	211,900
Percent employed in the industry		11.3%
Number of unemployed	66,800	7,200
Unemployment rate	3.4%	3.3%

For more information on employment numbers or for a historical comparison, go to the Labour Force Survey or Statistics Canada websites.

2. Industry Growth:

- The Retail Trade industry is expected to grow on average 2.4% annually from 2006 to 2011.
- Approximately 26,671 jobs will be created in the forecast period. Employment is expected to increase to 238,605 by 2011.
- This industry is expected to provide 11.3% of all new jobs in Alberta between 2006 and 2011.

For more information, see the Alberta Modified Canadian Occupational Projection System Outlook (2006-2011) online and the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website's industry descriptions.

Outlook

The Retail Trade industry is forecast to continue growing. However, according to the *Canadian Industrial Outlook: Autumn 2006*, a factor that could limit the amount of consumer expenditure is the progressively high price of gasoline. For the first time in 20 years, consumers are devoting three per cent of disposable income to gasoline purchases. High prices will eventually translate to a declining demand for certain types of motor vehicles and may reduce the amount of income available for retail spending.

The *Alberta Occupational Forecast 2007-2012,* indicates the Retail salesperson and sales clerk occupations are expected to create over 7,600 jobs from 2007 to 2012. *Alberta's Occupational Demand and Supply Outlook (2006-2016),* forecasts a supply shortage for cashiers from 2012 to 2016. As a result of such labour shortage in the Retail Trade industry, some grocers in the province have begun to invest in computer kiosks, which enable customers to scan and bag their own purchases.

Small retail businesses may experience increased financial pressures because of rising commercial rent costs in Alberta. In addition, challenges that accompany the strong growth in the Retail Trade industry should be expected to continue as labour shortages carry on, particularly in northern areas like the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, where retail sales are increasing as a spin-off from oil and gas. The high wages in the Construction, Mining, and Oil and Gas Extraction industries will most likely continue to lure labour away from the Retail Trade industry.

3. Company Size

Establishment Size	Alberta Businesses		Trade*	
	Number of Employees	%	Number of Employees	%
Less than 20 employees	525,000	34.1%	101,200	40.1%
20 to 99 employees	543,600	35.3%	99,600	39.5%
100 to 500 employees	292,400	19.0%	45,700	18.2%
Over 500 employees	178,900	11.6%	5,600	2.2%

Data Source: Labour Force Historical Review 2006 Statistics Canada

* Both Wholesale and Retail Trade are included.

Section B: Human Resources Profile

1. Occupational Information:

Some examples of occupations that can be found in the Retail Trade industry include:

- cashier;
- direct distributor;
- optician;
- pharmacist; and
- retail store manager.

For a complete listing of all occupations related to this industry as well as detailed information on education and skill requirements, visit the Alberta Occupational Profiles website.

2. Demographics: Age and Gender

According to the Labour Force Survey, the gender break-down in the Retail Trade industry is as follows:

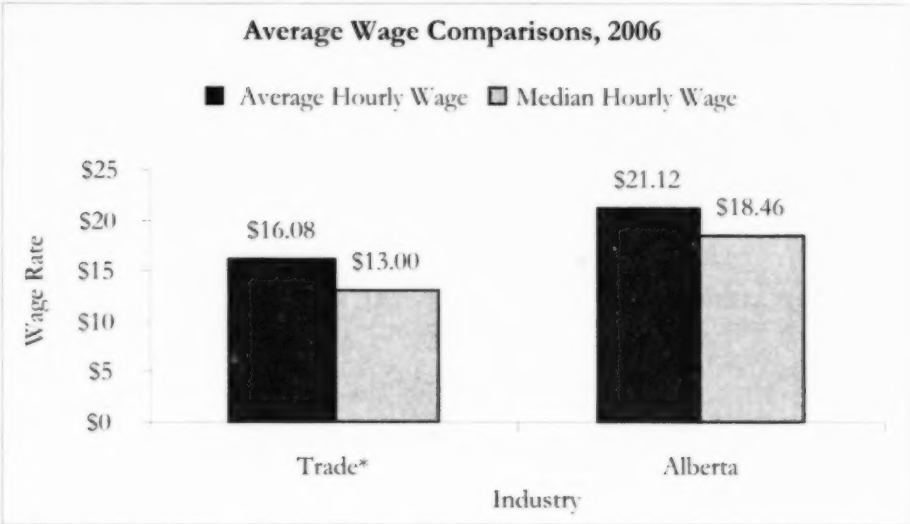
- women employed: 114,100 people, or 53.8%
- men employed: 97,900 people, or 46.2%

In comparison, women accounted for 45.3% and men made up 54.7% of the total employed in Alberta.

Age Characteristics	Alberta Employees		Retail Trade Industry Employment	
	Number	%	Number	%
15-24 years	329,600	17.6%	70,000	33.0%
25-54 years	1,286,500	68.8%	116,300	54.9%
55 years and over	254,600	13.6%	25,700	12.1%

Data Source: Labour Force Historical Review 2006, Statistics Canada

3. Wages:



Data Source: Labour Force Historical Review 2006, Statistics Canada
*Trade includes both Wholesale and Retail Trade.

Wage and Salary Information for Selected Occupations

Occupation	Average Hourly Wage			Average Annual Salary
	Starting	After 3 years	Top	
Pharmacists	$ 38.12	$ 37.88	$ 40.54	$ 75,830
Retail trade supervisors	$ 12.39	$ 15.00	$ 17.28	$ 28,927
Cashiers	$ 7.49	$ 8.98	$ 11.73	$ 14,238

Data Source: 2005 Alberta Wage and Salary Survey

For more information on wages, refer to the WAGEinfo webpage. For job descriptions, duties, required skills and education for specific occupations in the Retail Trade industry, visit the ALIS website.

Section C: Additional Information

1. Links to Selected Industry Associations:

- Retail Council of Canada
- Motor Dealers' Association of Alberta
- Pharmacists Association of Alberta

2. Link to Government Library Database:

http://www.servicelink.gov.ab.ca/libraries/workplace/